DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 210 296 TM 810 940

AUTHOR	Griffin, Virginia; And Others
TITLE	National Evaluation of Head Start Educational Services and Basic Educational Skills Initiative. Project Report 10: Phase II, Fall 1979 Child Data Collection. Draft.
INSTITUTION	NTS Research Corp., Durham, N.C.
SPONS AGENCY	Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	1 Nov 80
CONTRACT	HEW-105-78-1306
NOTE	51p.; For related documents, see TM 810 936-942; The tables on page 9 and 10 are marginally legible due to small print.
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Basic Skills; *Compensatory Education; *Data Collection; Disadvantaged Youth; Economically Disadvantaged; Preschool Education; *Preschool Evaluation; *Program Evaluation; *Quality Control
IDENTIFIERS	*Project Head Start

ABSTRACT

The overall purpose of the national Head Start evaluation is to assess the impact, on the children and parents being served, of: (1) the educational services component of Head Start, and (2) a new demonstration program within Head Start, Basic Educational Skills (BES). The evaluation deals with a total of 65 Head Start programs and their families. This report is a brief summary of the data collection activities in 25 Head Start communities and 11 BES Head Start programs in fall, 1979. The first chapter contains an outline of the purpose, field procedures and production in non-BES Head Start programs which were randomly selected. The second chapter presents the purpose, procedures and production information concerning the BES programs. The third chapter describes the data management procedures for both Head Start and BES. The fourth chapter discusses the advances in the implementation of the study made is part of the Phase II activities. (Author/BW)

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ED210296

NATIONAL EVALUATION OF HEAD START EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND BASIC EDUCATIONAL SKILLS INITIATIVE

D R A F T

Project Report 10: Phase II, Fall 1979 Child Data Collection

D R A F T

November 1, 1980

Contract No. HEW-105-78-1306

Authors:
Virginia Griffin
Judy McNeil
Rebecca Posante-Loro
Daniel Ferritor

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Project Director: Judy McNeil

NTS Research Corporation
2634 Chapel Hill Boulevard
Durham, NC 27707

Prepared for:
The Administration for Children, Youth and Families
Office of Human Development
Department of Health and Human Services
Washington, D.C.

Project Officer: Dennis Deloria

TM 810 540

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NTS Research Corporation wishes to thank and acknowledge the many people who helped to make this study successful:

- The delightful children (more than 1300 of them) and their parents who allowed us to test, observe, and question them.
- Steve Fosburg, of Abt Associates, Inc., who lent his experience, expertise, and data file so that we could randomly select the 30 Head Start programs for the study.
- Richard Ruopp, Lori Brush, Jeff Travers, Nancy Goodson, and Merrit Nauta, of Abt Associates, Inc., who gave us numerous valuable suggestions for the study, particularly in the development of a classroom observation system and in field operations.
- The NTS field staff, Study Coordinators and Local Data Collectors, who helped us maintain good relations with the Head Start programs in their communities and who collected the data described in this report:

Ellen Abarca
Peri Lynn Axness
Barbara Baumgardner
Rhonda Bibbs
Joan Blair
Faye Carawan
Eileen Carfang
Darcus Carpenter
Lynda Jones Carr
Antoinette Claypool
Phyllis Clifton
Margaret Cooper
Donna Curtis
Sandra Curtis
Valerie Dingle
Georgia Edmondson
Dorothy Elliott
Janice Floyd
Barbara Fleenor
Patricia Gibson
Sandra Goodwin
Sara Grant
LaVerne Greenfield
Alice Harrison
Georgia Hill
Tonie Holman
Ellin Holohan
Nancy R. Jones
Mary Landry
Jane Leonard
Cynthia Lewis
Kathy Lind
Elizabeth Long
Rosemary Mallett
Hazel Montgomery
Linda Nelson
Marjorie Noone
Mary Osborne
Connie Phillips
Joetta Preston
Wendolyn Pruitt
Marilee Ross
Lenora Rouse
Rebecca Smitley
Mary Sanders
Norvell Stone
Pat E. Taylor
Joyce Tyler
Donna A. Wilkes
Rochelle Wooding
Christina Woods

o The staff and volunteers of these Head Start centers, Delegate Agencies, and Grantees who participated in the evaluation, answered our many questions, and allowed us to observe in their classrooms:

Basic Educational Skills
Head Start Programs

Seattle, Washington
Knoxville, Tennessee
Topeka, Kansas
Spokane, Washington
Naples, Florida
Gary, Indiana
Easton, Pennsylvania
Albany, New York
Red Lake, Minnesota
East Boston, Massachusetts
Leominsister, Massachusetts
Russelville, Arkansas
Amarillo, Texas
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Pleasant Hill, California
Huntington, West Virginia
Riverside, California

Head Start Programs

Goldsboro, North Carolina
Sumter, South Carolina
Asheville, North Carolina
New Bern, North Carolina
Edenton, North Carolina
York, Alabama
Maywood, Illinois
Norfolk, Virginia
Greeley, Colorado
Elmsford, New York
Saginaw, Michigan
Seattle, Washington
Redwood, California
Chicago, Illinois
Chandler, Oklahoma
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Uniontown, Pennsylvania
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Jackson, Mississippi
Terrell, Texas
Oceana, West Virginia
Greensburg, Pennsylvania
Los Angeles, California

NATIONAL EVALUATION OF HEAD START EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND BASIC EDUCATIONAL SKILLS INITIATIVE

PROJECT STAFF
Phases 1 and 2

NTS Research Corporation

Project Director:	Judy McNeil	
Deputy Project Directors:	Richard Rohlf Jacelyn Wedell-Monnig	
Principal Investigators:	A. Jackson Stenner Daniel Ferritor	
Directors of Training:	H. Judith Platt C. Wainwright Mengel	
Directors of Field Operations:	Virginia Griffin Rebecca Posante-Loro	
Regional Field Supervisors:	Kim Watterson Amy Yoffie Dorothy Carnegie	Evelyn Pinkney Susan Rosenthal Barbara Tannen
Field Supervisors:	Heidi Chapman Kathy M. Graham Jill Grossholz Pamela E. Jaskot Kerida A. Merritt	Lisa Simmons Martha J. Szegda Herman L. Turner Lindy S. Wagner Pauline Zobel
Supervisor of Data Management:	Ruth R. Ashe	
Computer Applications:	Michael McAnulty David Birnbaum Richard Merritt	Joe Howell Eloise Curry
Project Assistants:	Jackie Baggett Michael Lesh Janet Zelman	
Project Secretaries:	Linda Bailey Judy Crotts	Dianne Bennett Lenora Ellis
Major Consultants:	Ross Conner, Assistant Professor University of California at Irvine Richard Freemen Focus on Children Robert Boruch, Director Methodology and Evaluation Research Northwestern Universtiy Steven Fosberg Abt Associates, Inc.	

This report is one of ten submitted by NTS Research Corporation to the Administration for Children, Youth and Families under Contract No. HEW-105-78-1306.

Project Report 1: Design and Sampling

Project Report 2: Panel Recommendations

Project Report 3: Child Outcomes: Individual Testing Battery for the Fall 1979 Cohort

Project Report 4: National Evaluation of Head Start Educational Services and Basic Educational Skills Initiative: Individual Testing Battery for Fall 1979

Project Report 5: OMB Submission Package

Project Report 6: Description and Analysis of Program Data: Basic Educational Skills Initiative, 1979

Project Report 7: Description of Program Data: Head Start Sample Programs, 1979

Project Report 8: Generalizability Studies of the Child Test Battery and of the Alternative Classroom Environment Scales

Project Report 9: Procedures in the Implementation of the Study Design, 1978-79

Project Report 10: Phase II Summary Report: Fall 1979 Child Data Collection

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INTRODUCTION TO EVALUATION

Each year Head Start programs serve approximately 385,000 children and families, at a cost of over $700 million dollars--the largest annual federal expenditure for the education of preschool children. NTS Research Corporation is currently conducting the beginning phases of the largest and potentially most long-term evaluation of Head Start programs yet planned. The overall purpose of this evaluation is to assess the impact, on the children and parents being served, of: (1) the educational services component of Head Start programs nationwide, and (2) a new demonstration program within Head Start, Basic Educational Skills. The evaluation deals with a total of 65 Head Start programs and their families, potentially for 10 to 12 years.

Head Start is a nationwide program for preschool children of low-income families and is supported by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Since its inception in 1965, the goal of Head Start has been to improve each child's ability to deal both with the present environment in which he/she lives and with later responsibilities in school and life. Head Start provides services not only in the educational area, but also in the areas of health, nutrition, parent involvement and social services. While this is an evaluation of the educational component, the study also gathers information on Head Starts' other components.

The Basic Educational Skills Program is the newest experimental project initiated by Head Start. As stated in the BES Program Guidelines:[1]

> The purpose of the project is to demonstrate and test effective educational strategies that help young children acquire developmentally appropriate educational skills in a climate that supports physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development. The project links Head Start programs and public schools, together with parents, in a collaborative effort to facilitate the child's learning experiences. The overall objective is to enhance school readiness, later school achievement, and to promote attitudes conducive to life long learning. The specific aim is to try out a variety of educational approaches to increase the child's basic educational skills, with emphasis on learning outcomes in oral language, reading, writing, mathematics, science, problem-solving, and learning attitudes. (Learning attitudes includes self-esteem as a learner, motivation, curiosity, initiative, purposefulness, persistence, task completion, and interest in life-long learning.) (p. 1)

> The goals of this project are to examine the effectiveness of a variety of approaches of implementing the four program elements: Curriculum, Parent Involvement, Teacher Attitudes and Behaviors, and Continuity. These program elements have been highlighted by reviews of research and educational practice as among the principal variables that affect children's educational achievement. The principal purpose of the BES field experiment is to determine the contribution of variables associated with the four elements to children's acquisition of basic educational skills. (p. 5)

Individual Head Start programs are operated by local grantees which are community action organizations, public school systems, tribal councils, and other non-profit agencies. Decisions about such issues as staff, curriculum, facilities, and recruitment procedures are made by a local policy council composed of parents and other members of the community. With this kind of local initiative, Head Start programs vary widely from one location to another in the ways in which they deliver services--within the guidelines of performance standards set by the Federal agency which funds and administers the program, the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF). The national office of

[1]Administration for Children, Youth, and Families, Basic Educational Skills Project: A Head Start Research and Demonstration Initiative in Collaboration With the Elementary Schools; Guidelines for Local Head Start Programs and Elementary Schools, March 1979.

ACYF also periodically funds special demonstration programs (such as BES) for the purpose of initiating testing, and disseminating innovative program ideas.

The regional offices of ACYF are responsible for monitoring local program service delivery to ensure that each program meets the required prformance standards. Evaluations of Head Start program outcomes are initiated by the national office of ACYF. The evaluations are diverse and include three distinct kinds:

- Evaluations of the basic National Head Start program, which use representative national samples of about 30 of the total 1,800 programs, and examine the areas of Health Services, Educational Services, Social Services, Parent Involvement, Services to Handicapped Children, Services to Migrant Children, and Staff Training.

- Evaluations of the Head Start demonstration programs, each of which involve about a dozen sites nationally, including, for example, Project Developmental Continuity, the Child and Family Resource Program, Home Start Training Centers, the Bilingual/ Bicultural Curriculum Project, and the BES Project.

- Projects to develop evaluation measures and methods; for example, the project to translate the ETS CIRCUS preschool test battery into Spanish, and the project to develop a comprehensive set of measures of program effects on preschool children.

This evaluation represents both the first and second categories above; it is a nationwide evaluation of the Educational Services of the basic Head Start Program and the evaluation of the newest Head Start demonstration project, Basic Educational Skills.

ACYF has actively gathered information over the past fifteen years regarding both program delivery and program effects. A unique aspect of the evaluation described in this report is its focus on the relationship between program delivery and program effects on a national scale.

Overview of the Head Start Evaluation Design

This evaluation is a longitudinal study that will follow children and their parents from preschool through the fourth grade. The study focuses on the preschool and elementary experiences of three groups of children and their parents:

- Those who participate in typical Head Start programs--the Head Start Study Group
- Those who are eligible for Head Start but who are not enrolled--the Alternative Services (Control) Group
- Those who participate in the Basic Educational Skills demonstration program--the BES Group

The major evaluation questions to be addressed in this study are as follows:

1. What different types of approaches do Head Start programs use to deliver educational services? How do these approaches differ in BES programs? How do these approaches differ from programs in alternative service settings?
2. How do different program approaches, and ways children and parents partake of the programs, affect the benefits achieved by children and parents?
3. Do children and parents in BES programs benefit more than children and parents in non-BES Head Start programs? Do children and parents in both BES and non-BES Head Start programs benefit more than children and parents in alternative service settings?

The dominant issues contained in this set of questions is a focus on the relationships between program delivery and program effects on a national scale.

As mentioned above, the evaluation is longitudinal and will study children (and their parents) from preschool through the fourth grade. Over the next three years, three cohorts (one small cohort and two full cohorts) of preschool age children will be studied. Each full cohort will be drawn from 16 Basic Educational Skills demonstration programs and from 30 randomly selected Head Start programs and their communities. It will involve 4560 children and their families per cohort: 60 BES children from each BES program, 60 Head Start from each regular Head Start program, and 60 non-Head Start children from each regular Head Start program's community.

The study design is innovative for two reasons. First, it focuses on the relationships between process and outcome variables in preschool settings. Second, it is one of the first preschool field evaluations to incorporate a true experimental design. In those instances in which a participting Head Start program receives applications from more children than it can serve, random assignment of children into the Head Start program and a non-Head Start group will be implemented. The use of this study plan will, hopefully, result in one of the strongest research efforts ever conducted under the auspices of ACYF.

INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

The Fall 1979 Data Collection phase of the National Evaluation of Head Start Educational Services and the Basic Educational Skills Demonstration was the first collection of child baseline data during the evaluation. The evaluation as a whole, being conducted by NTS Research Corporation, is described in the preceding pages. This report is a brief summary of the data collection activities in 25 Head Start communities and 11 Basic Educational Skills Head Start programs during the months of October, November, and December 1979. Chapter One contains an outline of the purpose, field procedures and production in non-BES Head Start programs which were randomly selected for participation in this evaluation. Chapter Two presents the purpose, procedures and production information concerning the BES programs. Chapter Three is a description of Data Management Procedures for both Head Start and BES; and Chapter Four discusses the advances in the implementation of the study made as a part of the Phase II activities.

CHAPTER ONE

HEAD START DATA COLLECTION

The purpose of the Fall 1979 field effort was to collect pretest data on the evaluation's first cohort of children, through the administration of a standard child test battery and the collection of child background information. This evaluation activity was one part of the overall research design, which is discussed more extensively in Project Report 9: Implementation of the Study Design.

Head Start Field Procedures

The child test battery was administered individually to approximately 1100 Head Start and non-Head Start children in 25 Head Start (non-BES) communities by 57 trained testers. In seven of the 25 sites, where the number of eligible applicants to the Head Start program was greater than the program capacity, child selection was accomplished through random assignment of children to Head Start and control groups. The control groups are referred to by NTS as the Alternative Services Groups (ASGs) since they receive dental services from the Head Start programs as an incentive for their participation. First, NTS randomly selected, from a list of applicants, 120 children eligible to be enrolled in Head Start. From this group, 60 or fewer children were randomly selected to be in the Head Start Study Group (HSSG), and 60 or fewer children were randomly selected to be tested as the Alternative Services Group (ASG).

In three additional sites, the Alternative Services Groups (ASGs) were formed in different manners. In two, the ASG was composed of children from local day care centers who met Head Start eligibility requirements and in the other the ASG was taken from a waiting list of eligible applicants. In those three sites and another 15 Head Start sites, NTS randomly selected 60 children from those enrolled in the Head Start program to comprise the HSSG. In these 18 sites there was no randomly assigned ASG.[1]

Testing in the 25 Head Start sites described above was carried out by 57 local field staff hired and trained by NTS professional staff. Two types of testing personnel were involved: Study Coordinators (SCs) and Local Data Collectors (LDCs). The SCs were community residents who were hired in the Spring of 1979 (particularly for those sites where random assignment of children was expected to take place as of March 1, 1979) to serve as liaisons between NTS and the individual Head Start program, as well as to administer child tests. The LDCs were hired in August 1979 to assist in obtaining parent permission and administering the child tests. These local field staff were trained by NTS on field operations procedures and child testing procedures in intensive one-week training conferences held in Denver, Colorado and Dallas, Texas in October 1979.[2]

On-site field personnel comprised the greater part of the NTS field operations staff. The NTS field staff consisted of a Director of Field Operations (at NTS), three Regional Field Directors (at NTS), eight Field Supervisors (at

[1]Eventually the evaluation will include ASGs in each of the participating non-BES Head Start communities, composed in one of the above three manners.

[2]Three conferences were originally planned to be held in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Denver, in September 1979. Due to funding delays, however, these were cancelled and rescheduled for October. Though testing was planned to begin on October 1, therefore, it did not begin until October 22, three weeks later. This resulted in less time before the forced end of testing prior to Christmas recesses, and therefore fewer children were tested than were available.

NTS), 20 Study Coordinators (on-site), and 37 Local Data Collectors (on-site). In seven sites where no Study Coordinator was hired, two Local Data Collectors were hired. One of the two Local Data Collectors was designated Lead Local Data Collector, having similar responsibilities to a Study Coordinator (See organizational chart in Figure 1).

The NTS field staff was organized into teams comprised of two or three Field Supervisors and one Regional Field Director, with each team member being responsible for several specific Head Start sites. Throughout the course of the Fall Data Collection effort, the appropriate Field Supervisor or Regional Field Director supervised the field procedures and testing logistics in his/her assigned sites. Problems and current production (tests scheduled and completed) were discussed among the in-house field staff at weekly meetings, with on-site field staff being kept informed of decisions on procedures. In addition, as a quality control measure, testers were monitored on-site early in the testing process by a Field Supervisor. As tests were completed, materials were sent to NTS to be logged and coded in preparation for analysis.

Head Start Site Classification

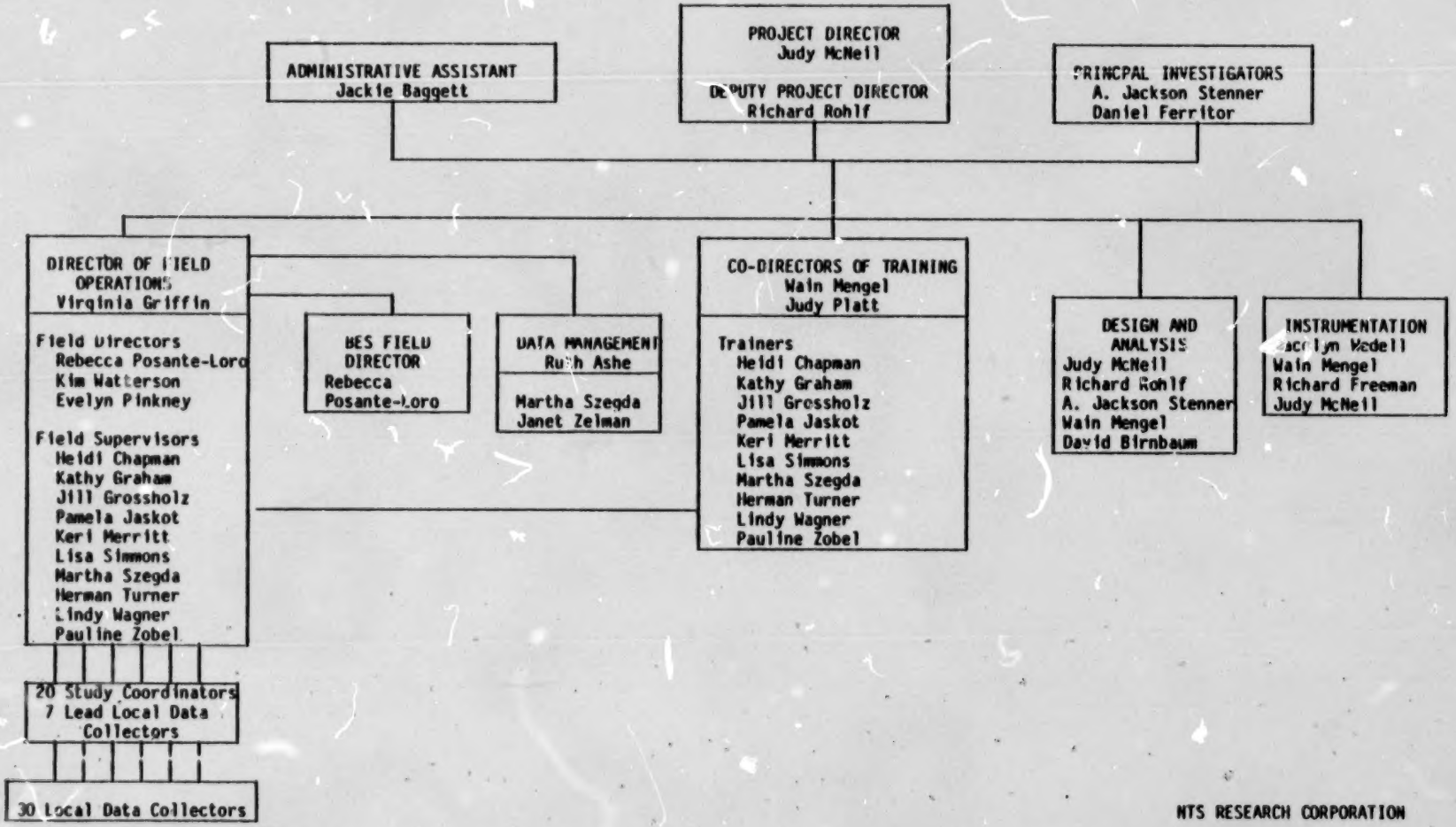
During 1979 each of the Head Start sites was classified as either "randomization" or "non-randomization" depending upon whether or not random selection was being attempted and on the success of recruiting 60 extra Head Start eligible children for the individual program.[1]

Randomization sites. In randomization sites, the Alternative Services Group and Head Start Study Group children were randomly assigned. The NTS Study Coordinator obtained a list of all of the eligible applicants for the Head Start

[1] If at the time of the Spring 1979 site visit to the programs, the program had already begun enrollment for Fall 1979, a decision was made not to attempt randomization until Fall 1980. In one additional program, local objection to random assignment led to not attempting randomization in 1979.

NTS PROJECT STAFF FOR THE NATIONAL EVALUATION OF HEAD START EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND BASIC EDUCATIONAL SKILLS INITIATIVE

December 1979



NTS RESEARCH CORPORATION

program and forwarded it to NTS where it was edited and keyed for the computer. The computer was programmed to select randomly a group of children for the Head Start program.[1] The remaining children were classified as "not in Head Start." From these two groups, 60 or fewer children were randomly selected for the Head Start Study Group (HSSG) and 60 or fewer children for the Alternative Services Group (ASG). The random selection sites and their initial group sizes are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Randomization Sites

Site I.D.#	HSSG Sample Size	ASG Sample Size
1222	42	58
1370	58	60
1354	45	67
1347	59	77
1248	53	17
1255	61	45
1388	50	61

Non-randomization sites. Random selection was achieved in seven Head Start programs for the Fall 1979 cohort. (Further details regarding this process are contained in the last section of this report.) As described below, the 18 remaining programs were "non-randomization sites," where the ASG was recruited non-randomly or where there was no ASG for this year. The two major obstacles to random selection for this year were the lateness of the original contact with sites regarding participating in the evaluation and a shortage of children recruited. NTS expects to be able to overcome these obstacles for future cohorts. In the non-randomization sites, the Study

[1]The number of children selected for Head Start was the number of available spaces. Before the children were initially selected, NTS removed from the list those children whom the program felt must be served and those children were immediately enrolled in Head Start.

Table 2

Non-randomization Sites with No Alternative Services Group

Site I.D.#	HSSG Sample Size
1230	50
1396	61
1412	60
1339	60
1362	60
1263	55
1495	60
1487	60
1305	60
1461	59
1180	59
1453	59
1206	60
1404	59
1479	59

Coordinator obtained a list of all the children enrolled in the Head Start program and from that list 60 or fewer children were randomly selected for the HSSG. The non-ramdomization sites where no ASG existed are shown in Table 2.

NTS developed two experimental approaches to recruiting children for the ASG in non-randomization sites. First, the "waiting list" procedure involved using the Head Start program's existing waiting list to select an ASG. This year, where enrollment had already begun before NTS' site visit, this approach was tried. In the future, it may be a viable procedure in sites where the community objects to randomization. Site #1321 participated in this experiment with a sample size of 60 in the HSSG and 54 in the ASG.

Second, a "day care" procedure was tried in two non-randomization sites. The procedures required that the on-site Study Coordinator solicit the cooperation of a local day care center which served the same catchment area as the Head

Table 3

Non-randomization Sites Where ASGs Were Composed Without Randomization

Site I.D.#	HSSG Sample Size	ASG Sample Size	Procedure
1321	60	54	Waiting List
1214	60	61	Day Care
1313	60	40	Day Care

Start program. From a list of children who attended day care, 60 or fewer children were randomly selected for the ASG. The two sites and the sample sizes involved in this experiment are shown in Table 3.

Non-participant sites. Three sites were eliminated from the Fall 1979 data collection effort. Site #1198 was dropped due to the lengthy process of obtaining approval for the study from the research department of the public school system, which is the delegate agency for this program. By the time approval was granted, only four weeks remained for testing. This site will participate in the future, however. Testing in Site #1420, a bilingual program serving predominantly Spanish-speaking families, was eliminated for this year. Although the child test battery itself had been successfully translated into Spanish, the materials for use with parents were not acceptable in their Spanish version. Finally, Site #1438 was dropped from the Fall field effort because of the death of the NTS Study Coordinator there. Further, the program was undergoing an administrative change of grantees and thus asked NTS to delay their participation for one year.

Head Start Field Production Report

In October, 1979, the Study Coordinators and Local Data Collectors began Fall data collection. Data collection took place during seven weeks (October 22

through December 7). During those weeks, the field staff was responsible for: (1) contacting Head Start and non-Head Start parents and obtaining permission to test their child; (2) completing the Child Data Form for each child in the sample; (3) scheduling the child tests; (4) administering the child tests; and (5) transmitting the data to NTS.

Field operations status report. Table 4 presents by site and center the results of the Head Start data collection effort as reported by the field staff. Outlined below is a description of the status report.

Column A. Reports the program location and center identification numbers.

Column B. Reports the group size for the Head Start Study Group and the Alternative Services Group and the total size for both groups. Grand total is 1910.

Column C. Reports the number of children who did not participate in the study for the following reasons:

1. Parent refused - The parent did not give permission for NTS to test their child (only 30 out of 1910).

2. Too young to test - The child was not at least three years old the day of the test (only 2 out of 1910).[1]

3. Handicapped - The child's handicap prevented him/her from being tested (15 of 1910).

4. Must serve - The child was classified as a "must serve child" by the program meaning automatic enrollment and therefore was not eligible for testing (1 of 1910)[2].

5. Never contacted - Due to time constraints, the child was never contacted to be in the study (342 of 1910), showing the unfortunate effect of NTS' funding delays).

6. Moved - The child moved out of the Head Start catchment area prior to testing (96 of 1910).

[1]The sample children must be three to five years old.

[2]Most "must serves" were removed prior to group selection.

Field Operations Status Report for Head Start (Non-BES) Sites
October - December 1979

| Column A | Column B | | | Column C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Column D | | | Column E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Field Operations Status Report for Head Start (Non-BES) Sites
October - December 1979

Column A	Column B			Column C																		Column D			Column E																	
	SAMPLE SIZE			Number of Children Who Did Not Participate and Reasons																		TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN SCHEDULED FOR TESTING			TESTING RESULTS																	
				1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10				1		2		3		4		Total Number of Child Test Completed								
SITE/CENTER I.D.	Head Start Study Group HSSG	Alternative Services Group ASG	Total Sample Size	Parent Refused HSSG	ASG	To Young to Test HSSG	ASG	Handicapped HSSG	ASG	Must Serve HSSG	ASG	Never Contacted HSSG	ASG	Moved HSSG	ASG	Dropped HSSG	ASG	Over Income HSSG	ASG	ASG Enrolled in Headstart HSSG	ASG	Transferred to Other Ctr. HSSG	ASG	HSSG	ASG	Total	No Show or Never Scheduled HSSG	ASG	Child Would Not Cooperate HSSG	ASG	Child Sick HSSG	ASG	Transportation Problems HSSG	ASG	HSSG	ASG					
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1. 14816	20		20	1																				19		19								19								
2. 14825	23		23					1								2								20		20	1				1			18								
3. 14834	17		17											1										16		16	1							15								
1. 14718	29		29													1								28		28	1							27								
2. 14727	30		30													1								27		27								27								
1. 12514	61	45	106			1	0					30	24			4	0							26	21	47								26	21							
1. 14512	60		60	1	0			7	0					1	0	4	0							47		47								47								
1. 13710	45	45	90		0								3			2				8				43	28	71		2														
2. 13729	15	9	24																					15	9	24		2						43	26							
1. 14013	59		59											6		3								50		50					2			15	7							
1. 14932	20		20													1								19		19								48								
2. 14923	20		20													1								18		18			1					18								
3. 14914	20		20											1		1								19		19			2					18								
																1																		17								
1. 13611	20		20	2																				18		18								17								
2. 13620	20		20																					20		20					1			20								
3. 13639	20		20									8												12		12								12								
TOTALS	1370	540	1910	8	27	1	0	14	0	1	0	243	99	62	34	116	9	0	2	0	96	1	4	924	249	1173	25	12	1	0	10	4	3	2	879	230							
GRAND TOTAL	1370	540	1910	30		2		15		1		342		96		125		25		96		5		924	249	1173	37		7		15		5		1109								

7. Dropped - The child never appeared for enrollment in the program, or once enrolled, the child left the program and ceased to attend classes (125 of 1910).

8. Over-income - The child's family income was higher than eligibility guidelines, therefore, was not eligible to participate in the study (25 of 1910).

9. ASG enrolled in Head Start - The child dropped out of the Alternative Services Group and enrolled in Head Start (96 of 1910).

10. Transferred to another center - The child transferred to a center not in the sample (5 of 1910).

Column D. Reports the number of children scheduled to be tested in the Head Start Study Group, the Alternative Services Group and total for both groups (total is 1173).

Column E. Reports testing results.

1. Final no show or never scheduled - The child did not arrive for testing after repeated appointments or testing was terminated before the child could be scheduled (37 of 1173).

2. Child would not respond - The child would not respond to the child test items (7 of 1173).

3. Child sick - The child was sick and unable to be tested (15 of 1173).

4. Transportation problems - The child had problems getting to the testing location, although parents were reimbursed for transportation expenses (5 of 1173).

5. Total child tests completed - Reports the total number of tests completed (1109 of 1173).

Group Sizes and Results

The initial Head Start Study Group consisted of 1370 children, and the Alternative Services Group was made up of 540 children, giving a total sample size of 1910 children.

The results of the data collection effort are summarized in Table 5. The final testing response rate (Column E) for each of the study groups are: Head Start Study Group, 879 children or 72 percent of the children, completed the Child Test. In the Alternative Services Group, 230 children or 69 percent were tested; making an overall test completion rate of 71 percent. It should be noted that nonparticipants in categories 6 through 10 were removed from the sample size when calculating the results. Due to the budgetary constraints and time delay in data collection, it was impossible to replace these study group children, though it would be possible to replace such children in future cohorts.

A most unique situation developed in one site. Random assignment took place smoothly; there were sufficient numbers of children in both groups. However, the Head Start grantee developed some problems during the summer of 1979 and had to delay opening the program in the fall. As testing concluded, we had tested the ASG children, but Head Start had still not opened. We therefore have no HSSG in that site.

Table 5

Head Start Sample Sizes and Final Production Results

		HSSG n=1370		ASG n=540		TOTAL n=1910	
		Number of Children	Percent of HSSG	Number of Children	Percent of ASG	Number of Children	Percent of Total
A.	Non-Participants						
	1. Refused	8	<1%	22	4%	30	2%
	2. Too Young to Test	1	<1%	1	<1%	2	<1%
	3. Handicapped	14	1%	1	<1%	15	1%
	4. Must Serve	1	<1%	0	0%	1	1%
	5. Never Contacted	243	18%	99	18%	342	18%
	Total	267	20%	123	23%	390	20%
	6. Moved	62	5%	34	7%	96	5%
	7. Dropped	116	8%	9	2%	125	7%
	8. Over Income	0	0%	25	5%	25	5%
	9. Enrolled in Head Start	0	0%	96	18%	96	5%
	10. Transferred to Another Center	1	<1%	4	1%	5	<1%
	Total	179	13%	168	31%	347	18%
B.	Total Scheduled for Testing	924	67%	249	46%	1173	61%
C.	Total Not Tested						
	1. No Show or Never Scheduled	25	2%	12	2%	37	2%
	2. Uncooperative	7	<1%	0	0%	7	<1%
	3. Transportation Problem	10	1%	5	1%	15	1%
	4. Became Ill	3	<1%	2	<1%	5	<1%
	Total	45	3%	19	4%	64	3%
D.	Total Tested	879	64%	230	43%	1109	58%
E.	Total Tested Excluding F-J rows 6-10 of Non-Participants		74%*		69%**		71%***

* Sample size = 1370 - 179 = 1191
** Sample size = 540 - 168 = 372
*** Sample size = 1910 - 347 = 1563

CHAPTER TWO

BASIC EDUCATIONAL SKILLS DATA COLLECTION

The purpose of the Fall 1979 data collection effort in the BES sites was to pilot the procedures for the testing of BES children. At present, summative impact analysis of the data is not planned.

BES Field Procedures

Data collection in the BES programs in the Fall of 1979 consisted of the administration of the child test battery to 15 children in each of 11 internal BES projects. NTS originally planned to test 15 children in each of 13 internal programs; however, testing was not conducted in the two BES programs which serve predominantly Spanish-speaking families. Although the child test battery itself had been successfully translated into Spanish, the materials for use with parents were not acceptable in their Spanish version. The planning phase for the data collection effort in the 11 internal programs began in early September. Actual testing took place the weeks of November 26 and December 3.

Since this data collection was a pilot effort, the design called for only a small number of children per site to be tested. Therefore, 15 children were selected randomly for testing at each site. Data collection responsibilities in the BES sites did not require hiring and training of local data collectors due to this small sample size. A Durham-based NTS Field Supervisor was assigned to test in each of the internal BES projects. (See organizational chart, Figure 1). These Field Supervisors were the NTS staff who had pilot tested the

child tests in the summer and who had trained the Head Start Local Data Collectors on the administration of the child tests. Initial contacts with all sites were made by the BES Field Director. These contacts were used to develop a test visit schedule and to introduce the programs to their respective Field Supervisor.

Once a preliminary schedule was developed, each Field Supervisor was responsible for completing the logistics for all testing, from the first contact with program staff to the logging of completed tests by Data Management. Problems which were encountered in setting up testing logistics prior to the visits were discussed with the BES Field Director. Once on site, the Field Supervisors reported daily to NTS to resolve particular concerns.

The Field Supervisor's responsibilities prior to the child testing visit included obtaining a complete list of all BES children in the program by center, assigning identification numbers to the children, randomly selecting one or two centers at each site in which to test and randomly choosing 20 children from within those selected centers for testing (15 children for testing and five for an alternates list). Once these 15 children were identified, parent permission was obtained and a Child Data Form was completed for each child by the BES program, including the identification of the child's teacher(s).

Testing in each program was completed within a five-day period. All arrangements for the testing were completed prior to the test period. If there were circumstances which prevented a child from participating in the study, NTS was notified and replaced the child who could not participate with another child from the alternates list. The BES program obtained parent permission and completed a Child Data Form for the alternate. In addition, before the NTS staff member arrived on site, (s)he arranged and/or confirmed a testing location, confirmed that there was parent permission for each child's participation and

obtained a detailed schedule for each day's testing. Once on site, the staff member verified each required permission form, completed any information on the Child Data Form which was missing and conducted individual 45-minute test sessions with each of the 15 children. The BES Program Managers assisted the NTS staff via telephone and correspondence in all phases of testing logistics prior to and during the testing visit.

BES Field Production Report

On November 26, the first testing visits took place in BES programs. Testing was completed in four programs that week and in the additional seven the following week. Of 165 children scheduled for tests, Field Supervisors tested 153 children for a 93 percent rate of completion. Seven children were not tested because of illness during the testing week. One child refused to respond, and four tests were not completed because inclement weather prevented the program from opening or the day the tests were scheduled.

Status report. Table 6 presents the results of the BES Data Collection effort by program. Outlined below is a description of that report.

Column A. Reports the program name.

Column B. Reports the sample size of the BES study group.

Column C. Reports the number of children in the BES group who did not participate, for the following reasons:

1. Parent Refused - the parents did not give permission for NTS to test their child.
2. Handicapped - the child's handicap kept him/her from being tested.
3. Not contacted - not contacted because of a serious family problem at the time or because of a mix-up in procedures.
4. Moved - the child moved out of the BES catchment area.
5. Dropped - the child never appeared for enrollment, or subsequently left the program.

Table 6

Field Operations Status Report for BES Programs
November - December 1979

Column A	Column B	Column C							Column D			
Program	Sample Size	Non-Participants*							Testing Results			
									Tests Not Completed			
		1. Refusal	2. HC	3. Not contacted family problems procedural mix-up	4. Moved	5. Dropped	6. Transferred centers or programs	7. Spanish-speaking	Illness	Refusal	Weather conditions	Tests Completed
2121	15**							15**				
2139	15			1	3	2						15
2048	15	1						1	1			14
2071	15						2		1			14
2089	15				1				1			14
2113	15					1						15
2105	15			1								15
2097	15		2		1	2			2			13
2170	15				2					1		14
2030	15										4	11
2162	15**							15**				
2147	15	1							1			14
2154	15				1				1			14
Totals	165	2	2	2	8	5	2	1	7	1	4	153

*Replaced prior to testing visit
**These figures were not included when calculating the totals or final response rate.

6. Transferred centers or programs - the child was transferred to a center or or program which was not in this year's sample.

7. Spanish-speaking - not testable due to a lack of Spanish version materials for obtaining parent permission.

Column D. Reports testing results.

1. Illness - child not tested due to illness during the testing week.

2. Refusal - the child refused to respond.

3. Weather conditions - testing was stopped prematurely because of extremely inclement weather.

4. Tests Completed - reports the number of children in each program who were tested.

As indicated in Table 6, replacements of study group children were needed in all but one of the sites prior to the testing week. Eight of these children were replaced because the families had moved and the child was no longer in the BES program. Five children had dropped from the program, two had been transferred into centers which were not in the study, two parents had refused permission, one child was not fluent in the English language, two children were handicapped and the program felt they should not be tested, and two children's families were not contacted because of family problems. All of these children were replaced by choosing the next name from the randomly ordered list of alternate children for each site.

Group Sizes and Results

Table 7 is a summation of the data collection effort this Fall in the BES sites. Of a possible 195 children to be tested (30 in bilingual sites), 165 were scheduled and 93 percent of these were tested (153).

Table 7

BES Sample Sizes and Final Production Results

		Total	
1.	Sample Size	195	
2.	Non-Participants		
	A. Spanish Speaking Sites	31	
	B. Moved	8	
	C. Dropped	5	
	D. Transferred	2	
	E. Refused	2	
	F. Not Contacted	2	
	Total	50	
3.	Total Scheduled for Testing	165	
4.	Total Not Tested		
	A. Illness	7	
	B. Refused	1	
	C. Inclement Weather	4	
	Total	12	
5.	Total Tested	153	(93%)*

*Percentage based on those tests which were completed out of those children scheduled for testing. This excludes the non-participants.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA MANAGEMENT

Data Receipt Control System

For both Head Start and BES sites, a computer printout which lists the study group children by identification number within programs was used as the Receipt Control System. When a package arrived at NTS, its contents were inventoried and the status of the package was documented on the printout. The printout was in order by Child ID within program, so that the status of a given package could be made readily available to the Field Operations staff. A completed participant package contained a Child Test Booklet, a Parent Participation Statement, a Parent Permission Form, and a Child Data Form. The Field Supervisor was notified immediately if an incomplete package was received. A non-participant package required the Child Data Form only.

Data Edit

In October 1979, a Data Receipt and Edit Manual was prepared. Two Senior staff members, who had assisted in the development of the Child Tests, trained the Data Manager, a Research Assistant and two editors on the edit procedures. In order to have consistency in the resolution of problems, a Field Supervisor, trained in the administration of the Child Tests, was responsible for documenting and resolving all problems not covered in the edit manual. A rate of six Child Test Booklets edited per hour was attained.

Quality Control

During the first week of editing, 100 percent of each editor's work received a 100 percent re-edit. The second week a 20 percent sample of each editor's work was re-edited, and thereafter a 10 percent sample was selected. Problems discovered during the edit were reviewed with the editor.

Child Test Review

The Field Supervisors assigned to a particular site had also been involved in training the field staff on the administration of the Child Tests and had extensive experience in administering the Child Tests. Because of their expertise, they were also responsible for weekly review of two Child Test Booklets received at NTS for each tester. Once the review was completed, the tester was contacted and the two Child Test Booklets were discussed. This provided immediate feedback to the tester and also provided the tester the opportunity to discuss problems or concerns he/she might have.

Document Control

Upon completion of the edit, the Child Test Booklet was assigned to a batch, with a maximum of 20 Child Test Booklets assigned to a batch. Each batch is stored in a secure document control area. Once an instrument is batched, it can never be removed from its assigned batch. In order to review an instrument, the entire batch must be signed out. When the batch is returned, the ID number of each instrument is verified against the original list of batch ID numbers.

Codebooks

In October, a Child Test Codebook was developed. The Codebook defined and named each variable, specified the field length for data entry, and range and consistency checks. In addition, the Codebook documented the specifications for the computer edit and scoring.

Disposition of the Remaining Forms

In addition to the Child Tests, the following data collection forms were used in the Fall data collection effort:

1. Parent Permission Form. A statement signed by the parent giving NTS permission to test their child.

2. Parent Participation Statement. A statement signed by the parent acknowledging the fact that the parent would be paid $5.00 incentive payment if their child was tested.

3. Child Data Form. Collected background data on the child. This form will be used to locate the child for later data collection periods.

Each of the above forms were filed in the corresponding program file. A codebook has been developed for the Child Data Form in the event that the forms are keyed at a future date.

Head Start Data Management Status Report

Table 8 documents the number of completed test booklets received at NTS from each center within each site. For two sites, the number of completed Child Tests received differs substantially from the number reported on the Field Status Report (Table 4). NTS experienced serious difficulties with one tester in each of these sites (extreme difficulty in making contact; possible falsification of data). The number in Table 8 reflects the number actually received at NTS and judged to be valid tests.

Invalid Tests

As a result of the Data Edit of Child Test Booklets, the validity of the Child Tests was in question in two sites. NTS called the parents and teachers of the children whose tests were in question for additional information. On the basis of those conversations and our examination of the test booklets, we determined whether or not to consider a given test valid or invalid. Invalid tests were not keyed and are not part of our data files.

Table 8

Head Start Data Management Report

HEAD START (NON-BES) SITE/CENTER I.D.	SAMPLE SIZE HSSG	SAMPLE SIZE ASG	COMPLETED TESTS RECEIVED HSSG	COMPLETED TESTS RECEIVED ASG
Site 131				
1. 13112	30	0	17	0
2. 13149	20	0	13	0
3. 13121	11	0	9	0
4. 13176	0	9	0	9
5. 13167	0	31	0	26
Site 138				
1. 13817	23	14	9	0
2. 13835	27	47	13	0
Site 120				
1. 12015	60	0	21	0
Site 141				
1. 14111	14	0	11	0
2. 14120	45	0	30	0
Site 121				
1. 12113	20	0	8	0
2. 12122	20	0	13	0
3. 12177	0	21		20
4. 12159	20	0	17	0
5. 12186	0	25	0	21
6. 12168	0	15	0	4
Site 118				
1. 11819	30	0	3	0
2. 11828	29	0	0	0
Site 137				
1. 13719	22	18	14	8
2. 13728	36	42	26	17
Site 135				
1. 13513	15	28	10	6
2. 13522	18	4	10	0
3. 13531	5	21	2	1
4. 13540	7	14	7	6
Site 124				
1. 12417	21	17	15	0
2. 12435	32	0	0	0

Continued on next page

Table 8, continued

Head Start Data Management Report

HEAD START (NON-BES) SITE/CENTER I.D.	SAMPLE SIZE HSSG	SAMPLE SIZE ASG	COMPLETED TESTS RECEIVED HSSG	COMPLETED TESTS RECEIVED ASG
Site 133				
1. 13318	35	0	31	0
2. 13327	15	0	11	0
3. 13336	10	0	7	0
Site 146				
1. 14610	6	0	3	0
2. 14624	53	0	30	0
Site 126				
1. 12612	19	0	8	0
2. 12621	18	0	2	0
3. 12630	18	0	6	0
Site 130				
1. 13014	15	0	4	0
2. 13023	9	0	0	0
3. 13032	36	0	17	0
Site 139				
1. 13915	49	0	34	0
2. 13924	12	0	12	0
Site 123				
1. 12319	49	0	34	0
Site 134				
1. 13452	46	30	0	26
2. 13425	13	47	0	32
Site 122				
1. 12211	15	28	12	1
2. 12220	27	30	25	1
Site 148				
1. 14816	20	0	19	0
2. 14825	23	0	18	0
3. 14834	17	0	15	0
Site 147				
1. 14718	29	0	27	0
2. 14727	30	0	27	0
Site 125				
1. 12514	61	45	6	6

Continued on next page

Table 8, continued

Head Start Data Management Report

HEAD START (NON-BES) SITE/CENTER I.D.	SAMPLE SIZE HSSG	SAMPLE SIZE ASG	COMPLETED TESTS RECEIVED HSSG	COMPLETED TESTS RECEIVED ASG
Site 145				
1. 14512	60	0	47	0
Site 132				
1. 13210	45	45	43	26
2. 13229	15	9	14	7
Site 140				
1. 14013	59	0	48	0
Site 149				
1. 14932	20	0	18	0
2. 14923	20	0	18	0
3. 14914	20	0	17	0
Site 136				
1. 13611	20	0	17	0
2. 13620	20	0	19	0
3. 13659	20	0	12	0
TOTAL	1429 (1969)	540	825 (1042)	217

Table 9

BES Data Management Report

HEAD START/BES SITE CENTER ID	SAMPLE SIZE	COMPLETED TESTS RECEIVED
Amarillo, Texas		
1. 21327	15	15
East Boston, Mass.		
1. 20417	6	5
2. 20426	9	9
Easton, Penn.		
1. 20726	8	7
2. 20738	7	7
Huntington, W Va.		
1. 20818	5	5
2. 20827	5	5
3. 20836	5	4
Gary, Indiana		
1. 21110	15	15
Knoxville, Tennessee		
1. 21023	9	9
2. 21032	6	6
Naples, Florida		
1. 20916	15	13
Pleasant Hill, California		
1. 21719	15	14
Red Lake, Minn		
1. 20310	15	11
Russelville, Arkansas		
1. 21416	15	14
Topeka, Kansas		
1. 21513	15	14
TOTAL	165	153

CHAPTER FOUR

ADVANCES MADE AS PART OF THE PHASE II ACTIVITIES

Evaluation project activities in Phase II primarily focused on three areas discussed below: (1) implementation of random selection in the Head Start sites; (2) data collection logistics; and (3) continued program cooperation. NTS believes that significant accomplishments in all of these areas were produced by evaluation staff and local program personnel during Phase II.

Implementation of Random Selection of Children to Groups

By far the most challenging aspect of the evaluation thus far has to do with the interactions with programs regarding random selection. In the course of the past year, NTS has encountered in the programs a multitude of understandings and misunderstandings about random selection. We have consistently documented and strived to improve our communication with programs regarding this facet of the study.

For the original NTS visit to each program in the Spring of 1979, NTS developed a slide/tape presentation about the study, with emphasis on random selection. The site visitors also discussed the subject at length with each program director.

In May 1979, NTS trained 20 of our local Study Coordinators for their roles, particularly their continuing involvement in random selection. Numerous written materials have been produced since February 1979 for the purpose of communicating about this process, which is central to the present study.

Implementation of random selection was attempted in 14 of the 28 Head Start programs for the Fall 1979 cohort. These programs were selected in consultation with ACYF and each received a $5,000 grant to provide dental services to the Alternative Services Group Children, as an incentive for family participation.

Once a program understood and agreed to random selection of children to Head Start and non-Head Start Groups, implementation of the random selection procedures was still an enormous task. In order to accomplish random selection, the program needed to recruit at least 60 more eligible children than their program could serve. Although 60 children may not appear to be a significantly high number, it was difficult in many sites to achieve this goal for the following reasons:

1. Some of the catchment areas served by Head Start programs in the study are also served by day care centers which serve the same population as Head Start;

2. In some rural communities, the catchment area covered several hundred square miles, which made it both difficult and expensive to locate and recruit additional eligible children;

3. Some of the Head Start programs did not provide transportation throughout their catchment areas;

4. Some programs were still recruiting children two or three weeks after the programs opened; and

5. Some of the programs did not have recruitment procedures which would yield 60 additional children (NTS staff assisted in recruitment only when the program requested their assistance).

As a result of these problems, six of the programs which had initially agreed to participate in random selection were unable to do so. Nine additional sites had expressed serious doubt at our first contact about their ability to recruit a sufficiently large surplus of eligible applicants. Random assignment was not even attempted in those sites this year. However, as a result of the past fall's experiences, NTS now has developed recruiting procedures which we believe will result in our ability to recruit sufficient numbers of children in nearly all of the currently identified sites.

In addition to the difficulties with recruitment itself, it was also difficult to determine ahead of time how many children needed to be recruited. Since Fall 1979 was the first time that the random assignment procedures were tried, it was not possible to accurately predict all of the critical variables. It was readily apparent that the list of applicants for the program should contain upwards of 60 more children than the program can serve so that at least 60 children could be asked to participate as members of the ASG. But how many more than 60 need to be in that group initially? It varies greatly from site to site. Among the influencing factors are:

- o The rate of refusal to participate in the ASG. Fortunately, this rate was very low, and can be decreased further with experience in field work.
- o The rate at which children leave the Head Start program. As spaces occur in the program, they must be offered to other children. If the ASG contains the only other eligible applicants, they will be invited to enter the program, keeping the HSSG group filled, but depleting the ASG.
- o The rate at which families leave the area or become impossible to locate. This depletes the HSSG and the ASG.

Other problems which hindered the implementation of random selection were: (1) programs began recruiting and processing applications as early as March 1 (NTS could not begin the random selection process until after the Spring training conference for Study Coordinators, which took place in May 1979); (2) ACYF did not officially notify the programs until late in the summer that normal admission guidelines were being waived so that random selection would not violate Head Start procedures; and (3) a decision was not made by ACYF until late summer concerning the amount and type of grant (dental or comprehensive medical services) the program would receive for the ASG.

As we struggled through the random selection process, the problems which occurred were documented by the Field Supervisor assigned to each site. As a result, we have begun preliminary revisions of random selection procedures, information booklets for participants, and presentations to programs and parents.

Data Collection Logistics

The procedures used in this study for obtaining Parent Permission Forms, scheduling Child Tests and the administration of the Child Tests, were similar to those used in numerous evaluations and survey research studies. The scheduling and administration of the Child Tests presented NTS with few problems. In October 1979 NTS trained 57 local employees to administer the tests. In a span of seven weeks a total of 1344 children were tested. Had tester training not been delayed for an entire month due to funding delays, the number of children tested would have been much higher.

There were several factors which caused the percent of children tested to be lower during the 1979 Fall data collection period than can be expected in the future. Among these were delayed funding, the need for more data collectors, and unclear perceptions on the part of local program staff of their role in the evaluation. Each of these factors is discussed further below.

The largest single cause of reduced testing was the delay of a full month in training conferences and the onset of testing. The delay, itself the result of delayed funding of Phase II of the contract, caused all field work to cease in September, with training conferences postponed from September to October and testing postponed from October 1 until late October. In spite of this delay, it was necessary to terminate testing in early December as originally planned. Thus, there was less overall time for testing children.

In addition, since Local Data Collectors were hired in August and since they expected to begin work in September, not all of them were able to wait until October for their employment to begin. A total of five Local Data Collectors resigned prior to October training (a remarkably small number, we believe, considering that each tester's training dates were changed three times). NTS was able to replace two of them, but there remained three sites with only one tester instead of two. This naturally resulted in fewer children being tested in those sites than would otherwise have been the case. Fortunately, this problem with timing is not expected to recur in the study. In spite of these problems, child testing went smoothly in all sites, resulting in the testing of 1,344 children, as stated above.

There were differing perceptions among local Head Start program staff regarding the amount of assistance they could and should provide to the evaluation. In one program, the NTS Study Coordinator was not given direct access to the families' names and addresses, creating much difficulty in contacting parents. In those programs where access to program files was granted, families' addresses were frequently outdated and program staff differed in their willingness to help us trace families. In one site it eventually became clear that false addresses were given in cases where families actually lived outside the program catchment area. These families were particularly difficult to locate until program staff gave assistance.

We have developed procedures for working with programs to clarify roles and expectations, and this will largely solve the above problem. However, a problem which can be expected to recur (and about which NTS has developed recommendations) is the universal problem of locating the parents of the population being studied. In some areas, the population was highly transient. In others, incorrect addresses were reported, perhaps so that the family appeared to live within the catchment area of the Head Start program. In some areas the testers had to work at night in order to contact the working parents, and finally in some

areas the testers were afraid to work at night or alone. As a result, several of the programs assisted NTS by holding parent meetings with the Head Start parents which allowed us the opportunity to collect many of the permission forms at one time. In the future, the Permission Form could be part of the application process. The right to refuse to participate would not influence Head Start eligibility and would not decrease or increase the child's chances of admission.

Continued Program Cooperation

NTS gained and sustained the cooperation of all 13 returning BES programs and of all 28 regular Head Start programs which have agreed to participation in the study.[1] All of these programs have been extremely helpful in the processes of gathering information about the programs, compiling rosters of children, selection of chidlren for the study, contacting parents, arranging for testing locations, and scheduling testing.

In BES programs, all preliminary parent contacts and scheduling were done by the willing program staff. BES programs were typically so pleased with the NTS staff member who was on-site for the one week of BES testing that they have requested that individual's repeated assignment for visits to their program. In addition, staff members of all 16 newly funded BES programs (and the 13 returning programs) met with NTS staff at the December 1979 BES conference in Washington, D.C.

As previously stated, each of the 28 Head Start programs was assigned to an NTS Field Supervisor. In addition, the 28 on-site Study Coordinators (SC) and Lead Local Data Collectors (LLDC) were responsible for keeping the programs informed of project activity, responding to program questions or concerns,

[1] Of the original 30 regular Head Start programs randomly selected for the study, two were dropped prior to May 1, 1979. One program was opposed to the evaluation from the time of the first site visit, and one was dropped due to termination of its Head Start program funding.

assisting the programs with any of the evaluation activities for which the programs desired help, and keeping NTS informed of problems in the site. Documentation of field procedures, schedules, and descriptions of planned activities were sent to the programs by the NTS Field Supervisor (with copies to the SC or LLDC). The Field Supervisor telephoned the program whenever the documentation required follow-up or review. The SC or LLDC was responsible for reviewing all NTS correspondence with the program and contacting NTS if additional information was required. He/she was also responsible for notifying the appropriate program personnel of any activity which required approval or use of the program's time or facilities.

The majority of the programs were highly cooperative and actively involved our personnel in such activities as the development of family recruitment procedures, processing applications, and attendance at parent policy meetings.

Several staff asked NTS professional staff, who had visited the programs in the Spring of 1979, to visit their programs again to further explain the evaluation and/or to assist the program in explaining random selection to the community. All 28 programs have agreed to continued participation in the study, if continued by ACYF. Twenty-five have agreed to consider random selection of children to Head Start and non-Head Start Groups in the future cohorts.